

REMARKS

Claims 1-2, and 4-9 have been amended, claim 3 has been cancelled, and new claim 10 has been added. Claims 1-2 and 4-10 remain in the application.

As recognized by the Examiner, starting from Jolly et al. (US 5'683'544) there is no disclosure or suggestion in the prior art of the feature of amended claim 1 that the device includes at least one reactor equipped with a hollow, perforated and rotatable core onto which the porous structure block or roll to be treated is fitted, said core being used to inject the treatment solutions used into the block or roll and/or to aspirate it therefrom and/or to rotate the block or roll on itself in order to homogenise the diffusion of the fluids within it and/or to expel said fluids centrifugally.

Furthermore the devices of the prior art, e.g. that of Jolly et al., only allow to treat rolls by enrolling them whereas the device of the present invention enables treatment of structures of varying thicknesses and shapes, in particular in the form of blocks or rolls (cylinders formed by a rolled strip), throughout their volumes, and without unrolling them in the case of rolls. The device of the invention thus shows important advantages over known devices for depositing conductive polymer on complex porous structures to impart electrical conductivity thereto.

The subject matter of amended claim 1 is thus novel and non-obvious to the skilled person in view of the prior art, hence patentable.

Amended claim 9 or new claim 10 contains antecedent basis for "the perforated rack and/or the flanges" in claim 4 or 5, respectively.

With regard to the Examiner's remarks that the supplementary features of claims 2, 8 and 9 are limitations of intended use that do not structurally limit the claimed apparatus, the skilled person reading the application as a whole, and in particular the Figures and the parts of the specification relating to the description of the Figures, and using his general technical knowledge in the art, immediately understands what limiting technical features are implied by the recited intended use.

For claim 2: the "means for carrying out the following conductive activation steps on the blocks or rolls" and the conditions under which those means are used, are disclosed in the specification (English translation of WO99/53503)

- page 6, lines 1-4,
- from page 6, line 19 to page 17, line 24, and
- page 18, lines 5-26,

with reference to Figures 1-3.

For claim 8 see the specification page 13, lines 14-26, with reference to Figures 1-3.

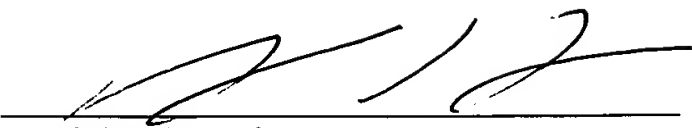
For claim 9: see the specification page 11, lines 7-14

No additional claim fee is required by this Amendment.

In view of the above, it is believed that all remaining claims are in condition for allowance, and a notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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